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**Minutes of Meeting
Grafton Planning Board
February 22, 2010**

A regular meeting of the Grafton Planning Board was held on Monday, February 22, 2010 in Conference Room A at the Grafton Municipal Center, 30 Providence Road, Grafton, MA. Present for the meeting were Chairman Bruce W. Spinney III, Vice-Chairman, Robert Hassinger, Heath Christensen, Stephen Qualey and Associate Member Sadie Miller. Absent from the meeting was Clerk Peter Parsons. Staff present was Town Planner, Stephen Bishop and Assistant Planner Ann Morgan.

Chairman Spinney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ACTION ITEM 1-A – CONSIDER DECISION – “HILLTOP PLAZA” – 116 MILFORD ROAD

MOTION by Mr. Christensen, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to table the decision for “Hilltop Plaza” to the next Planning Board meeting on March 8, 2010 due to the absence of Clerk Peter Parsons. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

DISCUSSION ITEM 2-A – FISCAL BUDGET FY 11 – ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER POSITION

Mr. Bishop distributed a draft letter to the Board of Selectmen from the Planning Board regarding the impacts of the Town Administrator's Fiscal year 2011 budget proposal will have on the Planning Department and its operations, specifically cutting the Assistant Planner position to part time. Mr. Bishop noted the letter outlined the reduction in services and growth, along with the adverse impact this proposal would have on much of the professional work from the department. Mr. Bishop read aloud parts of the letter stating how the Planning Office has been actively involved in many activities and considerable revenues to the Town through many grants. Mr. Bishop urged the Board to attend the Finance Committee public hearing on Saturday, March 6 to voice their position on the budget proposals presented to the Finance Committee. Chairman Spinney added that the budget proposals were not a reduction, but more of a “reorganization nature” proposal through the budgeting process. Mr. Christensen, former Chair of the Economic Development Commission and now a current member, noted that he was unhappy with the moving of budget funds from the Assistant Planner position to support an Assistant Town Administrator position. Mr. Christensen added that the EDC was working to create an increase of economic growth for the Town, which usually comes through the Planning Office and Board. Mr. Hassinger stated that he had no explanation or was ever told about this proposal and that he would need more information before he would move forward on adding any new salaried jobs at Town Hall. Ms. Miller stated she echoed Mr. Hassinger and Mr. Christensen's words, noting that the position is needed to handle the extreme residential growth there has been within the Town. Mr. Qualey added that the economic slump will be short term, while there will probably be an economic boom to hit

the Town again, which will eventually show these budget proposals to be more problematic rather than a cure. Mr. Qualey also extended kudos to the Planning Staff for their preparation of the work for the Planning Board and specifically the ongoing work with the Fisherville and Farnumsville Streetscape Project. The Board continued to discuss the additional impacts of the budget proposals on the effectiveness of the Planning Office and the Planning Board.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to endorse the letter, have Chairman Spinney sign on behalf of the Planning Board and direct Staff to forward the letter to the Board of Selectmen. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

MOTION by Mr. Qualey, **SECOND** by Mr. Christensen, to approve the open session minutes of February 8, 2010 as drafted. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Bishop informed the Board that there had been no process in justification by the Town Administrator, that he had been informed in a five minute conversation during the day of the scheduled evening meeting with the Finance Committee and there was no further conversation or discussion.

MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIVE PLAN APPROVAL "PETERS ESTATES" SUBDIVISION – ETRÉ BUILDERS, INC., (APPLICANT/OWNER) – EXTEND CONSTRUCTION DEADLINE

Mr. Christensen read the legal notice and Chairman Spinney opened the public hearing. Ronald Etre was present for the meeting.

Mr. Bishop wished to note that Mr. Etre has kept an exemplary site and was very pleased at how the subdivision has progressed.

Ronald Etre informed the Board that he was about halfway through the project with five houses sold and occupied, two of which are Affordable units and that he was requesting a one year construction extension for the subdivision.

Mr. Hassinger noted that the Conservation Commission's comments stated the Order of Conditions will expire on March 16, 2010; and the Board of Selectmen stated that the developer needs to be sure to control run-off from the subdivision.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to close the public hearing. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to grant the applicant's written request for a one year extension to the construction deadline. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

MRSP 2009-12 D & F AFONSO BUILDERS, INC. (APPLICANT/OWNER) –
"VILLAGE AT INSTITUTE ROAD" – OFF INSTITUTE ROAD AND
WESTBORO ROAD

Chairman Spinney opened the public hearing. Present for the meeting were Normand Gamache & Michael Weaver of Guerriere & Halnon, Domenic Afonso of D & F Afonso Builders, Inc., and Traffic Engineer Rebecca Brown of Greenman-Pederson.

Mr. Weaver reviewed the Conventional & Flexible plans submitted and discussed the revisions made to the plans in response to Graves Engineering comments. Mr. Weaver noted that their revisions had not yet been reviewed by Graves Engineering. Mr. Weaver informed the Board they had added a walking path through the woods and a sidewalk along the west side of Institute Road. Mr. Weaver stated they had also revised the zoning yard setbacks, specified the Design Guidelines that have been incorporated for the 15% bonus provision; added North arrows; reduced the curb radius on Institute Road to 30 feet; addressed the cuts and fills in excess of six feet; and some suggested additions/changes to the plans. Mr. Weaver also noted they had tied their trails into the existing trail system of the abutting Town of Grafton property.

Chairman Spinney asked Mr. Afonso if he had decided on incorporating any affordable units into the project. Mr. Afonso stated he had tried the affordable housing route initially with the mixed use project and was unable to make it work profitably. Ms. Miller suggested the developer consider the affordable housing segment not just for affordability, but for marketability, since there are so many vacant properties in Town already.

Engineer Rebecca Brown reviewed the traffic and roadway concerns discussed at the previous hearing. Ms. Brown informed the Board that with the widening of Institute Road at the site roadways, it will be adequate to accommodate the anticipated type and volume of traffic based on Mass DOT guidelines. Ms. Brown also added that based on her findings within the report, the proposed site roadways are laid out in accordance with the Town of Grafton Subdivision Rules & Regulations

Mr. Hassinger expressed concerns whether the roadway was ever accepted by the Town and that subdivisions are required to be off a public roadway. The Board questioned the ability of the roadway base could withstand the increased traffic volume. Mr. Gamache stated he had tried to track the history of Institute Road, but noted that there is no one currently remaining in the DPW with the history knowledge of any previous work. Mr. Gamache added that the current acting Engineer did not have the time to spend on any research at this time. Mr. Gamache suggested they would perform testing on the roadway

with Graves Engineering witnessing and making a determination on what exactly the road base can withstand.

Mr. Hassinger also stated that he did not have the same interpretation of the intersection of streets under 600 feet as is being portrayed by the traffic engineer and that the developer should address Section 4.4.1 regarding setting aside land for playgrounds.

Robert Carroll of 72 East Street submitted photographs disputing the adequacy of the site lines on Institute Road and submitted information stating the decline in home sales in the surrounding area subdivisions.

Chairman Spinney informed the developer that the Board will need written confirmation that the roadway has been accepted by the Town as a public way, that there is sufficient road infrastructure to support the subdivision, and some feedback on the Affordable Housing Trust letter concerning some form of affordable housing consideration.

Mr. Afonso stated that he had tried an Affordable Housing mixed use proposal already, but was unable to work out a feasible plan. Mr. Hassinger noted he did not recall any plan being brought before the Planning Board on any previous project. Ms. Miller added that an alternative could be to donate land to the Affordable Housing Trust in lieu of building any units.

The Board unanimously agreed that the developer needs to reach the point where everyone agrees that Institute Road is a public way.

Mr. Gamache requested to continue the public hearing, allowing time to seek a legal opinion on how to proceed.

MOTION by Mr. Christensen, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to accept the applicant's written request to continue the public hearing to March 22, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

SP 2010-1 GARY HENRICH, (APPLICANT/OWNER) – 115 PLEASANT STREET – COMMON DRIVEWAY

Chairman Spinney opened the public hearing. Present for the meeting was Leslie Wilson, engineer for HS & T Group, Inc.

Mr. Bishop wished to note that he had received an email from Town of Grafton DPW Brian Szczurko just prior to the meeting stating he had visited the site and informed representatives of HS & T Group, Inc. that he does not see a problem with the reduction of the earthen mound to gain the necessary sight distance onto Pleasant Street. Mr. Szczurko added that HS & T engineers are to provide a standard detail depicting a typical driveway entrance that mitigates water from entering or leaving the roadway, and also

adjusting the proposed contours on the design plan to reflect as such. Mr. Bishop also noted that Graves Engineering had signed off on the revisions as adequate.

Leslie Wilson informed the Board that she had added the buildings across from the driveway onto the plan as requested, added signage for emergency vehicles to show three homes off the common driveway, and they had applied for a permit from Mass Electric for a temporary easement to perform site work.

Mr. Qualey asked if Mass Electric had approved the permit yet and was told not yet, but was in the process.

The Board discussed whether or not to close the public hearing or leave it open until all of the information required has been submitted. Mr. Bishop suggested closing the hearing and conditioning the decision with engineer review, requiring a final inspection and As-built plans demonstrating the final work has been completed. The Board continued to discuss how to condition the permit if the hearing is closed.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Christensen, to close the public hearing, leaving the record open to allow receipt of the required information discussed. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Christensen, to direct Staff to draft a decision, taking into consideration all the information received and the findings and conditions discussed. **MOTION** carried unanimously 4 to 0.

REPORTS FROM PLANNING BOARD REPRESENTATIVES ON TOWN COMMITTEES AND CMRPC

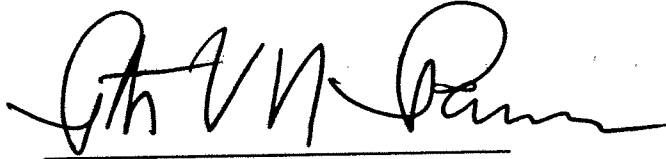
Mr. Hassinger reported that a letter has been sent out by the CMRPC stating that they will not be adding the 2.5% annual assessment increase to the Fiscal Year 2011 assessments due to the constrained municipal budgets.

STAFF REPORT – Fisherville & Farnumsville Streetscape Project

Mr. Bishop informed the Board that the Committee has become organized, gaining momentum, enthusiasm and a good outcome from this project. Chairman Spinney noted that he and Ms. Miller are the Planning Board representatives on this Committee, which has proven to be a serious project with a lot of community support. Mr. Bishop also added that there has been a viable venue for the park area and the resources may be out there to start accomplishing things by next spring.

MOTION by Mr. Hassinger, **SECOND** by Mr. Qualey, to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION carried unanimously 4 to 0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Parsons", written over a horizontal line.

Peter Parsons, Clerk